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PROGRAM Morning with Charles Kuralt
and Diane Sawyer STATION WDM TV
CBS Network

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SUBJECT CIA Involvement in Libyan Activities

JED DUVALL: Another charge of CIA involvement in Libyan terrorist activities has been raised, this time in a Washington courtroom. Douglas Schlachter, the man alleged to have helped former CIA agent Edwin Wilson run a Libyan training program, agreed yesterday to plead guilty to the illegal exporting of explosives.

Robert Schakne tells us that Schlachter's plea may be not the end of the case, but the beginning.

ROBERT SCHAKNE: In a heavily guarded federal courtroom, with all spectators first checked for weapons, Douglas Schlachter sat quietly, letting the lawyers do all the talking. They informed the judge that Schlachter not only would plead guilty, but would also, as they put it, cooperate fully, completely and truthfully with federal investigators.

According to his lawyer, among the things Schlachter has already told authorities is that two senior CIA officials, Theodore Shackley and Thomas Clines, were fully aware of Wilson's allegedly illegal activities.

ALVIN ASKEW: Basically, he told them that he was given instructions from active agents in the agency, the CIA, and that he in fact came back and reported to them and took instructions from them during his time in Libya.

SCHAKNE: Did Doug Schlachter implicate the senior CIA officials in that they knew about the activities that Wilson was conducting in Libya?

ASKEW: That's correct.

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SCHAKNE: Training Libyans in explosives.

ASKEW: That's correct.

SCHAKNE: And making bombs and manufacturing bombs.

ASKEW: That's correct.

SCHAKNE: And recruiting Green Berets.

ASKEW: That's correct.

SCHAKNE: In an interview with CBS News two months ago, Schlachter said he regularly reported to the CIA officials in 1976 and 1977. The officials he named, Theodore Shackley, then the Assistant Chief of CIA Clandestine Services, and Thomas Clines, then the Chief of Clandestine Training, have both since retired and could not be reached for comment.

Schlachter's lawyer says other witnesses and documents will corroborate his client's story.

For its part, the CIA has not absolutely denied Schlachter's allegations. A CIA spokesman would only say that a search of the files had thus far disclosed no documentary evidence to support the allegation. Privately, one top official said, "You can't rule out the possibility of an unauthorized operation."